

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4, 6-10, 13 and 15-41 remain pending in the application, with claims 1, 10 and 35 being the independent claims. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Initially, Applicants thank the Examiner for the exchange of voicemail messages on March 7, 2006, in which the Examiner clarified that the presently outstanding Office Action is non-final.

Applicants also thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 8 and 17 recite allowable subject matter and would be allowed if rewritten into independent form. However, Applicants have not done so, because Applicants continue to believe that the other pending claims also are allowable.

All pending claims remain rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) over U.S. Patent 6,480,844 (Cortes) in view of U.S. Patent 5,970,469 (Scroggie). Once again, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

In the Amendment/Response that was filed on October 26, 2005, Applicants made a number of specific points regarding the present invention and the deficiencies of the applied art, with specific citations to those portions of the present Specification and the applied-art references that support Applicants' position. However, none of such points is addressed in the present Office Action.

In this regard, MPEP § 707.07(f) provides, "Where the applicant traverses any rejection, the Examiner should, if he or she repeats the rejection, take note of the applicant's argument and answer the substance of it." Here, the present rejections are identical to those set forth in the previous Office Action, and yet no answer to Applicants' previous points has been provided.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner fully consider all of the points made in the previous Amendment/Response. Upon doing so, it is believed that the Examiner will conclude that all of the pending claims are allowable over the applied art.

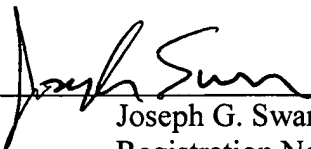
If, however, the Examiner continues to believe that any of the claims are not allowable over the presently applied prior art, then Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner specifically point out all of the believed deficiencies in the Applicants' arguments, together with specific citations to those portions of the applied-art references that are believed to support the Examiner's position. Any such further rejection should be made non-final, in accordance with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.113(b) and MPEP § 706.07, as well as the provisions of MPEP § 707.07(f) (cited above).

If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this paper that have not been accounted for in this paper or the accompanying papers, please charge the fees to Deposit Account No. 08-2025. If an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is required for the filing of this paper and is not accounted for in this paper or the accompanying papers, such an extension is requested and the fee (or any underpayment thereof) should also be charged to the Deposit Account.

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Respectfully submitted,
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